

# News Release

U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney  
Northern District of Ohio*

**For Release:**

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William J. Edwards, Acting United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, announced today that on April 17, 2008, Alfreda Watts of Akron, Ohio was sentenced to imprisonment for a period of 12 months, followed by 3 years of supervised release and ordered to pay restitution of \$750,000.00 by United States District Court Judge Lesley Wells. Watts had pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Mail Fraud and Mail Fraud.

The indictment against Watts charged that between March 1, 2001, and November 30, 2001, she conspired with Stanley Dickens to devise a scheme to obtain over \$1,000,000.00 worth of commercial trucks and trailers from AIM National Lease through the use of a fraudulent letter of credit purported to be authentic and from FirstMerit Bank. Watts, who was employed at FirstMerit Bank, used her position to allow Stanley Dickens to come into the possession of official FirstMerit Bank letterhead and stationary, which he then used to create a series of unauthorized and bogus letters of credit which were presented to AIM National Leasing to secure possession of the commercial trucks and trailers. Watts also used

her position to send and fax these unauthorized and bogus letters of credit to AIM National Leasing as part of the scheme for Dickens to obtain the commercial trucks and trailers. Watts also made unauthorized phone calls on behalf of FirstMerit Bank to AIM National Leasing posing as an official of the bank in an attempt to legitimize the fraudulent scheme.

Stanley Dickens had been previously sentenced to imprisonment for a period of 24 months for his role in the above-noted offense and other fraudulent schemes.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert F. Corts of the Cleveland U.S. Attorney's Office, following an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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